California’s Redistricting Commission

December 4, 2015

Eric McGhee
2001 redistricting poisoned the well

- Bipartisan deal to protect incumbents on both sides
  - Modest decline in competition for Assembly and Senate
  - Significant decline in competition for House
  - Limited effort to improve minority representation

- Outcome split traditional coalitions around reform

- End result: first significant reform in five attempts
New commission radically changed redistricting process

- **Old: Legislature**
  - Drew their own districts, plus BoE and Congress
  - No transparency

- **New: Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC)**
  - Independent commission of citizens
  - Chosen by complex process to ensure independence
  - Detailed instructions about goals and process
  - Highly transparent
Arguments for CRC

- More sensible districts
  - More compact, more representative

- Competitiveness
  - Wider range of candidates will run and compete for votes

- Turnout
  - More voters will have a say, so more will participate

- Moderate representation
  - Voters will cross party lines to support moderates

- Ending a conflict of interest
Redistricting provided more minority representation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Assembly</th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2001 Plan</td>
<td>2011 Draft Plan</td>
<td>2011 Final Plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Senate</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2001 Plan</td>
<td>2011 Draft Plan</td>
<td>2011 Final Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Congress</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Redistricting also split modestly fewer cities and counties…

### City Splits (Percent Intact)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan Type</th>
<th>2001 Plan</th>
<th>Draft 2011 Plan</th>
<th>Final 2011 Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assembly</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>91%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### County Splits (Number of Splits)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan Type</th>
<th>2001 Plan</th>
<th>Draft 2011 Plan</th>
<th>Final 2011 Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assembly</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
...improved the “compactness” of the districts...

### Average Polsby-Popper Compactness Scores

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Plan Type</th>
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<th>Draft 2011 Plan</th>
<th>Final 2011 Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assembly</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
…and improved “nesting” of assembly districts inside senate districts

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<th>2011 Final Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senate District Population in Two Largest Assembly Districts (Average)</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Number of Assembly Districts per Senate District</td>
<td>6.35</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>4.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Redistricting has created a few more competitive seats…

Competitive seats by registration, as share of total

- **State Senate**
  - 2010: 8%
  - 2012: 12%

- **State Assembly**
  - 2010: 10%
  - 2012: 14%

- **U.S. House**
  - 2010: 4%
  - 2012: 18%
Redistricting has created a few more competitive seats…
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Redistricting has created a few more competitive seats…
...prompted more open seats in most cases...

Open seats as share of total

- **State Senate**
  - Average: 2002-2010
  - 2012
  - 2014

- **State Assembly**
  - Average: 2002-2010
  - 2012
  - 2014

- **U.S. House**
  - Average: 2002-2010
  - 2012
  - 2014
...and initially forced the remaining incumbents to run in new territory

- Average incumbent in 2012 ran to represent only 55% old constituents

- 41% of incumbents in 2012 ran to represent more new constituents than old
More races have been close

Winners by less than 10 points, as share of total

State Senate  |  State Assembly  |  U.S. House

- **Average: 2002-2010**
- **2012**
- **2014**
Absolute turnout is down
Relative turnout is down
Arguments for CRC

- More sensible districts
  - More compact, more representative
- Competitiveness
  - Wider range of candidates will run and compete for votes
- Turnout
  - More voters will have a say, so more will participate
- Moderate representation
  - Voters will cross party lines to support moderates
- Ending a conflict of interest
Notes on the use of these slides

These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

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Thank you for your interest in this work.